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EL SALVADOR/  
CONGRESSMEN

BRINKLEY: The CIA is busy in Central America while Washington argues about what it is doing. It says it is only trying to keep foreign weapons out. Some in Congress say it is trying to overthrow the Marxist government of Nicaragua, so the CIA invited members of Congress to fly down and see what it's doing. They did yesterday. A report from ABC's Peter Collins.

COLLINS: Honduras was the first stop for the five members of the House Select Committee on Intelligence, but before the day was over, they had flown on to Nicaragua and El Salvador. It was supposed to be a low profile, secret trip to let them see for themselves whether the CIA-backed guerrilla operation against Nicaragua is violating the law. An amendment passed last fall says the operation must be aimed only at stopping Nicaragua from sending weapons to leftist guerrillas in El Salvador. It specifically bars attempts to overthrow the Sandinista regime. After private meetings with the Honduran president and armed forces chief, the congressmen declined to say whether they thought the operation was out of control. Then it was on to Nicaragua by U.S. Air Force plane, and there an hour's talks with top Sandinista leaders produced some sparks. BILL YOUNG (R-Fla.): There are some strong differences of opinions, you might expect, between the United States and the government of the Sandinista government.

COLLINS: Congressman Young suggested the CIA operation was too limited to topple the Sandinista regime. On arrival in El Salvador, the congressman found another member of the House, Clarence Long of Maryland. His appropriations subcommittee must vote tomorrow on \$60 million worth of aid to El Salvador. Long all but announced that as a condition for his committee's approval the Reagan administration will appoint a special high level ambassador to encourage peace talks. LONG: People want to see the beginning or at least some light at the end of the tunnels.

COLLINS: The Reagan administration encouraged the congressmen to come visiting in Central America, and by doing so, the president may have bought himself a bit more time to find a solution to the war here. Peter Collins, ABC News, El Salvador.